

*Just a selection
of the most popular
questions we are
asked about our
playground markings.*

What's the difference between your playground markings and traditional markings?

Our markings are traditional - we just use a modern material to create the designs. Modern playground markings are commonly referred to as 'preformed thermoplastic'. Put simply that means most of the designs are made in advance... for instance an a-z dragon is made up of the body sections, the head and the legs... These items are prepared in our cutting room, packed and safety transported to the playground where they are dropped into position and then heated.

What is it made of?

The thermoplastic is made from mainly recycled materials mixed with a binder, glass beads and the colouring pigmentation. The product is non-toxic and does not contain lead or any other harmful substances.

How does the heat make them stick?

This is the clever part. When the thermoplastic is heated using a high-temperature propane torch it soon starts to melt. At the point of liquification the heat is withdrawn and the plastic starts to solidify. As this process takes place it welds itself to the bitumen in the asphalt (or the primer if applied to concrete) and the surface aggregate. Once the plastic has cooled this bond becomes permanent.

How long does it take to apply?

That depends on the design but, as an example, a standard solid hopscotch can be laid in under 20 minutes from start to finish. A netball court or five-a-side pitch could take up to two hours.

How long does it take to dry?

The thermoplastic doesn't dry, it merely cools down. On an average day with a slight breeze you can touch it after 5 minutes and the children can safely play on it after just 15 minutes.

What about when it is raining?

The curse of the playground marking installer! Although it rains a lot in the UK it doesn't actually keep raining for very long at any one time so, as long as the playground doesn't become waterlogged or the standing water too deep, we can simply use the propane torches to dry the area and apply the markings as normal.

Are the markings slippery?

No. The thermoplastic contains 35% glass bead which acts as an anti-slip agent. When our installers are on site they will check the type of asphalt to determine if additional drop-on glass beads are required to aid friction. Occasionally asphalt containing 'shiny' or glossed limestone may require extra sprinkling or glass bead during the cooling process.

Is the product certified?

The thermoplastic is tested to BS:EN1436 as well as NF, Bast and many more. A copy of the specification sheet and certification is available on request.

Can you supply the markings for us to install ourselves?

We're afraid we cannot. Not only is the installation a skilled practice but the use of a propane gas torch is not recommended unless you are experienced.

How long do the markings last?

That depends on the particular playground - the amount of foot traffic, exposure to weather, etc. Generally our markings last at least eight times longer than standard playground paints.

Can we design our own markings?

Of course you can. Our playground markings brochure simply shows some of the more common and traditional markings. If you or the children have designed your own markings simply fax or email a sketch and we can quote from that.



Do you have to install during the school holidays?

Not at all. In fact most of our installations are done during term time. If you have another playground available for the children to use during break time that can be a big help - but if not we simply cordon off the area we are working in and down tools whilst the children play. Remember the markings are OK to use within minutes so the installation process never inconveniences you.



What is the most popular marking?

We seem to install more hopscotches and target bullseyes than any other markings. But roadtracks, sports markings and activity trails are also very popular. Generally schools tend to select a range of markings based on the age of the children.

We normally have our markings painted - is this better?

Preformed thermoplastic was invented as a direct replacement for playground paints. A painted hopscotch often doesn't survive the Winter and has to be re-painted the following Spring or Summer. Preformed thermoplastic may be slightly more expensive, but in the long-term you are getting a whole lot more for your money. Plus, these markings don't fade like paint.



Why do some companies have hollow designs instead of solid?

That's a question we can't answer. Almost all of our designs incorporate solid colour. It may cost us a little more but the overall impact is so much better. You only have to compare a hollow hopscotch to a solid hopscotch to see the difference...and our solid designs are normally cheaper than hollow as well!

Where is the product made?

There are only two major manufacturers of preformed thermoplastic in the world: one is based in Denmark and the other in Germany. We find the anti-slip properties of the Danish material to be far superior to its German counterpart and that is why we became one of the major importers of this product

If you cannot find the answer to your question please email info@activeplaygrounds.co.uk